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EXAMINER

BURGESS, BARBARA N

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2157

DATE MAILED: 03/28/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/675,700

Applicant(s)

STARR ET AL.

Examiner

Barbara N. Burgess

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 December 2005.
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 and 21-33 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 and 21-33 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

This Office Action is in response to amendment filed December 21, 2005. Claims 1-17, 21-33 are presented for further examination.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-17, 21-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Muller et al. (hereinafter "Muller", 6,650,640 B1) in view of Day et al. (hereinafter "Day", US Patent 6,065,096).

As per claim 1, Muller discloses an interface device for a computer, the interface device connectable to a network and storage unit, the storage unit including a disk drive, the interface device comprising:

- A sequencer including a hardware logic circuit configured to process a transport layer header of a network packet (column 4, lines 48-50, column 7, lines 20-25, 31-35, 64-67, column 8, lines 1-5, 17-20, 50-60, column 9, lines 1-5, column 15, lines 35-38, column 35, lines 53-67, column 36, lines 11-30);
- A memory adapted to store control information regarding a network connection being handled by said device (column 4, lines 20-25, column 9, lines 14-16, 20-25,

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56-58, column 10, lines 1-7, column 11, lines 46-59, column 12, lines 11-15, column 52, lines 64-67, column 53, lines 1-7);

- A mechanism for associating said packet with said control information (column 4, lines 45-50, 58-67, column 8, lines 50-60, 66-67; column 9, lines 13-17, 22-35, 66-67, column 10, lines 2-7, column 11, lines 46-59, column 12, lines 11-15, column 16, lines 59-67).

Muller does not explicitly disclose:

- selecting whether to process said packet by said computer or to send data from said packet to the storage unit, thereby avoiding the computer.

However, in an analogous art, Day discloses storage controllers which are integrated with personal computers allowing disk connections and protocols to be more flexibly selected but at the cost of less integration (column 1, lines 50-67, column 2, lines 50-55).

Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have found it obvious to implement or incorporate Day's selecting whether to process packet or send to storage, thereby avoiding the computer in Muller's system in order lower cost and complexity associated with high performance storage subsystems.

As per claims 2, 17, and 22, Muller discloses the interface device of claims 1 and 21.

Muller does not explicitly disclose the interface further comprising a SCSI controller connectable to the storage unit.

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However, Day discloses SCSI interface channels attached to disk drives (column 2, lines 40-54, column 5, lines 1-25).

Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have found it obvious to implement or incorporate in Muller's device Day's interface comprising a SCSI controller in order to provide for a simple, lower cost RAID controller architecture to enable lower cost and complexity associated with high performance and high reliability storage subsystems.

As per claim 3, Muller discloses the interface device of claim 1, further comprising a plurality of network ports, wherein one of the said network ports is connectable to the storage unit (column 4, lines 40-43, column 6, lines 37-40, column 7, lines 15-19, column 8, lines 40-43, column 9, lines 1-5, column 10, lines 65-67).

As per claim 4, Muller discloses the interface device of claim 1, further comprising a Fibre Channel controller connectable to the storage unit (column 61, lines 55-60).

As per claims 5 and 25, Muller discloses the network interface device of claims 1 and 21.

Muller does not explicitly disclose the interface further comprising a RAID controller connectable to the storage unit.

However, Day discloses a RAID controller that integrates onto a single integrated circuit of a general-purpose processor (column 2, lines 11-25, 55-67).

Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have found it obvious to implement or incorporate in Muller's device Day's interface comprising a RAID controller allowing the disk interface connections and protocols to be more flexibly selected but at the cost of less integration within the circuit.

As per claim 6, Muller discloses the network interface device of claim 1, further comprising a file cache adapted to store said data (column 56, lines 20-30, column 58, lines 26-30, column 61, lines 34-35, column 62, lines 47-52).

As per claim 7, Muller further discloses the network interface device of claim 1, further comprising a file cache adapted to store said data under control of a file system in the host (column 56, lines 20-30, column 58, lines 26-30, column 61, lines 34-35, column 62, lines 47-52).

As per claim 21, Muller discloses an interface device for a computer, the interface device connectable to a network and a storage unit, the storage unit including a disk drive, the interface device comprising:

- A receive mechanism that processes a Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) header of a network packet (column 4, lines 48-50, column 7, lines 20-25, 31-35, 64-67, column 8, lines 1-5, 17-20, 50-60, column 9, lines 1-5, column 15, lines 35-38, column 35, lines 53-67, column 36, lines 11-30);

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- A memory storing a combination of information describing an established TCP connection (column 4, lines 20-25, column 9, lines 14-16, 20-25, 56-58, column 10, lines 1-7, column 11, lines 46-59, column 12, lines 11-15, column 52, lines 64-67, column 53, lines 1-7);
- A processing mechanism that associates said packet with said information (column 4, lines 45-50, 58-67, column 8, lines 50-60, 66-67, column 9, lines 13-17, 22-35, 66-67, column 10, lines 2-7, column 11, lines 46-59, column 12, lines 11-15, column 16, lines 59-67).

Muller does not explicitly disclose:

- selecting whether to process said packet by said computer or to send data from said packet to the storage unit, thereby avoiding the computer.

However, in an analogous art, Day discloses storage controllers which are integrated with personal computers allowing disk connections and protocols to be more flexibly selected but at the cost of less integration (column 1, lines 50-67, column 2, lines 50-55).

Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have found it obvious to implement or incorporate Day's selecting whether to process packet or send to storage, thereby avoiding the computer in Muller's system in order lower cost and complexity associated with high performance storage subsystems.

As per claim 23, Muller discloses the interface of claim 21, further comprising a Fibre Channel controller connectable to the storage unit (column 61, lines 55-60).

As per claim 24, Muller discloses the interface device of claim 21, further comprising a file cache adapted to store said data (column 56, lines 20-30, column 58, lines 26-30, column 61, lines 34-35, column 62, lines 47-52).

As per claim 26, Muller discloses the network interface of claim 21, further comprising a file cache adapted to store said data (column 56, lines 20-30, column 58, lines 26-30, column 61, lines 34-35, column 62, lines 47-52).

As per claim 27, Muller discloses the network device of claim 21, further comprising a file cache adapted to store said data under control of a file system in the computer (column 56, lines 20-30, column 58, lines 26-30, column 61, lines 34-35, column 62, lines 47-52).

As per claim 28, Muller discloses a method for operating an interface device for a computer, the interface device connectable to a network and a storage unit, the storage unit including a disk drive, the method comprising:

- Receiving, by the interface device from the network, a packet containing data and a Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) header (column 4, lines 48-50, column 7, lines 20-25, 31-35, 64-67, column 8, lines 1-5, 17-20, 50-60, column 9, lines 1-5, column 15, lines 35-38, column 35, lines 53-67, column 36, lines 11-30);

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- Processing, by the interface device, the TCP header (column 4, lines 45-50, 58-67, column 8, lines 50-60, 66-67, column 9, lines 13-17, 22-35, 66-67);
- Storing, on the interface device, information regarding a TCP connection (column 4, lines 20-25, column 9, lines 14-16, 20-25, 56-58, column 10, lines 1-7, column 11, lines 46-59, column 12, lines 11-15);
- Associating, by the interface device, the packet with the TCP connection (column 35, lines 53-67, column 36, lines 11-30);
- Selecting, by the interface device, whether to process the packet by the computer or to send the data from the packet to the storage unit, thereby avoiding the computer (column 4, lines 45-50, 58-67, column 8, lines 50-60, 66-67, column 9, lines 13-17, 22-35, 66-67, column 10, lines 2-7, column 11, lines 46-59, column 12, lines 11-15, column 16, lines 59-67).

As per claim 29, Muller discloses the method of claim 28, further comprising creating, by the computer, the information regarding the TCP connection (column 5, lines 35-45).

As per claim 30, Muller discloses the method of claim 28, wherein the interface device includes a network port, and the packet is received via the port and the data is sent to the storage unit via the port (column 10, lines 1-7).

As per claim 31, Muller discloses the method of claim 28, wherein the interface device includes first and second network ports, and the packet is received via the first port and the data is sent to the storage unit via the second port (column 10, lines 35-47).

As per claim 32, Muller discloses the method of claim 28, further comprising storing the data on a file cache of the interface device (column 56, lines 20-30, column 58, lines 26-30, column 61, lines 34-35, column 62, lines 47-52).

As per claim 33, discloses the method of claim 28, further comprising adding a network protocol header to the data for sending the data to the storage unit (column 9, lines 50-67).

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Barbara N. Burgess whose telephone number is (571) 272-3996. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8:00am-4:00pm).


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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ario Ettinene can be reached on (571) 272-4001. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Barbara N Burgess
Examiner
Art Unit 2157

March 20, 2006


Barbara N. Burgess
Examiner